University of Alberta

Confederation to Millennium: Choral Music at Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa

by

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Canada

To Kathleen

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Introduction

Music in the Church of England has long been considered one of the most important aspects of the worship in the Church of England. Large cathedrals and schools in London, Cambridge and Oxford, to name just a few centres of activity, have earned world recognition through their excellent choirs, particularly the men and boys' choirs that many of them possess. These programs have been in existence for many hundreds of years, from before the time of composers such as William Byrd in the mid-sixteenth century up to the present day. These choirs audition boys and men and choose only the most skilled musicians. In return, the choristers might receive a wage or a scholarship and sometimes room and board during the time they are fulfilling their duties in the choir.

In the early stages of the formation of the Anglican Church of Canada, there was a similar attraction to creating choirs of men and boys' voices. By the late 1800s, many of the Cathedrals in Canada, including St. John's Cathedral, Winnipeg; St. James' Cathedral, Toronto; Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal; Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver; and Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa, had all established a choir of men and boys' voices. Today, only a handful of these choirs are still operating as men and boys choirs, and few operate without paying a wage to the choristers.

Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa,[1] is one of Canada's success stories with regard to sustaining a volunteer choir of men and boys. It has supported a men and boys' choir in some form since 1891. This paper will discuss the choral activity of Christ Church as a parish church from the early times before it was a Cathedral, and before the inception of the Men and Boys' Choir, up to the present day. The work and influence of the two longest serving organists of the Cathedral in this period, Dr. Godfrey Hewitt (1909-2002) who served at the Cathedral from 1932 until 1980, and Frances Macdonnell (b. 1947) who held the position from 1980 until 2003, will be discussed in detail. Their contributions to the music of the church, and the impact they had on both local and national levels can be of great use as models for the Anglican church musician in Canada. Both directors conducted a traditional English choir of men and boys' voices through much of the twentieth century on completely volunteer enrollment.

Both internal and external factors made it possible for these two directors to achieve the results they desired. External factors included the economic depression of the 1930s, the two World Wars, and a city which saw unprecedented growth in the 1950s and 1960s. The community surrounding the Cathedral will also be discussed as it relates to the success of the Cathedral's music program, including the prominent role the Cathedral has played over the years as a place of worship for the royal family, Governors General and politicians. Internal factors include negative and positive pressure from the clergy, churchwardens, vestry and congregation of the

[1] Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa will be referred to as "the Cathedral" throughout the rest of this paper.

parish, as well as structural renovations to both the organ and the church itself. Concerts and recital series in the building, organized by Hewitt and Macdonnell, also showcased the important exposure the church received from its surrounding area, while frequent national and international tours of the choir and recordings raised the choral program's standard to an international level.

The literature used in the preparation of this paper has mainly consisted of archival material from the Diocese of Ottawa, which is housed in the basement of the Cathedral. These materials include newspaper clippings about the choir, concerts, and services held at the Cathedral. Also available are reports written by the music committees of the Cathedral to the vestry, and personal correspondences between the organists, churchwardens and clergy of the church. These personal letters and reports have allowed for an internal view of the day to day life of the church. Controversial decisions and the minutes of vestry meetings give an understanding of the financial challenges the church had to overcome, as well as some of the strained relationships that might have existed between Hewitt and those who ran the daily operations of the parish, the Churchwardens. Newspaper clippings give an idea of the scope that the church achieved both through favorable concert reviews, publicity of important events and services, as well as the national recognition the church choir received through national and international tours.

Historical documentation of the parish church has been provided by two publications on the history of the church. The first is a book written by Hamnett P.

Hill (1876-1942) in 1932 for the centenary of the parish church titled *A History of Christ Church Ottawa*. The book describes the early settlement and growth of the city of Ottawa, the building of the original parish church, and the people who worshiped and worked at the parish including those who were heavily involved in the development of the music program. The second book was written in 1972 in celebration of the centenary of the 1872 building. The book is entitled *Cathedral in the Capital* and was written by Robert Hamilton Hubbard (1916-1989)[2], a long time parishioner and chorister during the time of Godfrey Hewitt. Hubbard's book makes use of Hill's earlier observations, and continues the history of the Cathedral, taking it through the economic recession of the 1930s and the growth of the city following the Second World War. He also highlights the connections between the church and the political figures resident in Ottawa, particularly the connections made with the successive Governors General of Canada.

Through the discovery of the literature, and examination of the archival material made available, this paper hopes to shed light on two of Canada's important choral conductors, organists and composers in the Anglican Church of Canada. A full understanding of Hewitt's contributions to the Cathedral's music program, including the advancements he made in the renovation of the building's pipe organ, and the awareness he created in the community to the British choral tradition; along with the educational advancements of Frances Macdonnell towards the understanding

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[2] An active historian in Ottawa, Hubbard was director of the National Gallery of Canada and Cultural Advisor to several Governors General. He also wrote articles and books on the history of Government House and the Parliament Buildings, but was especially attracted to the history of landscape artists in Canada. He edited many Canadian art history books, including a biography of Thomas Davies (1737-1812), a famous watercolour artist who resided in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

of the young male voice, will become a worthwhile document for those who have an ambition to succeed in working with a men and boys' choir.

Christ Church Cathedral – Early History (1832-1931)

The choral history of Christ Church Cathedral goes back to the early years of colonization. The parish has a long and proud tradition of choral activity reaching back to 1832 when Christ Church was a neighbourhood church in Bytown,[3] and not yet designated as a cathedral. The following section outlines a brief historical background of the parish church of Christ Church, the early development of its choir, and an historical reflection on the people involved in forming the music program of a parish church in Canada's capital city.[4]

The original church building was small, and by the late 1830s inadequate for the growing population of Bytown. As accommodation of the parish was already reaching the capacity of the small building, a gallery, or balcony, was built in the back of the church to accommodate a larger congregation. The first Sunday School and the church's choir, presumably a mixed adult volunteer choir, was established soon thereafter. J. F. Lehmann (c. 1795-1850) conducted the small choir "droning out the metrical psalms unaccompanied, until 1839 when a small organ was bought from Samuel Warren of Montreal."[5] It is also fair to assume that the choir would have made use of only the church's hymnal and a standard Anglican psalter, as no music book purchases are mentioned in the church records until after Lehmann's death in 1850.

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[3] Bytown was the name given to the area that is now Ottawa, after Lieutenant-Colonel John By, the engineer of the Rideau Canal, and founder of the city.

[4] A complete list of the musicians who worked at the Cathedral can be found in Appendix I and a list of the choirs which operated at the Cathedral can be found in Appendix II at the end of this paper.

[5] R. H. Hubbard, *Cathedral in the Capital* (Ottawa: Cathedral Centenary Committee, 1972), 21.

Three years passed before a permanent replacement was found for Lehmann. In 1853 John Mercer was announced as the new organist and choirmaster of the church and, presumably in preparation for his arrival, a few "music books" were purchased for the choir.[6] These music books were likely collections of church anthems and sheet music of well-known works that the choir could learn to sing as anthems, or communion motets that were not available in their standard hymnal. No mention is made of the titles of these books; however, by 1860 there are records which show that the choir owned copies of Handel's *Messiah*.[7]

The first significant mention of the choir's participation in a service comes in 1860. The Prince of Wales made an important visit to Ottawa to lay the corner-stone near Major's Hill Park for the construction of the Parliament Buildings. During the young prince's visit, a "crimson-draped pew" was prepared in his honour at Christ Church at a special service held on September 1st, 1860.[8] An organist from Montreal, Mr. Barnaby, accompanied the service.[9]

> The choir sang the canticles to chants by Jackson and Humphfreys[10], along with Psalm 119 – not all 176 verses of it, one hopes – and rendered an anthem from "The Messiah".[11]

It is unusual that the resident organist did not play at this auspicious occasion. However, documents indicated a rift between the choirmaster and the young rector.

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[6] Ibid., 27.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid., 29.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Hubbard is referring to English composers William Jackson (1730-1803) and John Humphfreys (Humphries) (c. 1707-1740)
[11] Hubbard. It is assumed that Hubbard is referring to a particular chorus from *Messiah*, as there are no 'anthems' in the work.

The difficulties between the rector of the parish, John Strutt Lauder, and Mercer came to a head in 1862. Lauder charged Mercer with frequent absences and with being "difficult", Mercer rebutted with complaints of Lauder's interferences and "hardness" towards him. These issues were likely compounded by Mercer's known problem with alcohol. In response to concerns about the choirmaster, a vestry meeting in 1862 resolved that "the organist's salary be reduced from $250 to $120 and then to zero, and finally that he be not re-engaged."[12] Later that same year, Christ Church hired S. B. (Herbert) Fripp as their new organist and choirmaster.

Fripp became heavily involved in other aspects of the musical life in Ottawa. He co-founded the Ottawa Musical Union, a choral-orchestral organization of nearly one hundred members. In 1865 Fripp formed the Ottawa Choral Society, which is arguably Ottawa's longest standing community choir. The Ottawa Choral Society presented a Sacred Music Festival later that same year.[13] Christ Church likely saw great benefits from Fripp's association with the Choral Society. Choristers who sang in the Choral Society presumably followed Fripp to join the Cathedral Choir. Likewise members of the Cathedral Choir would have surely joined up with Fripp and his Choral Society.[14]

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[12] Ibid. 31.

[13] Jean Southworth, *Ottawa, Ont* [Web Page] (Encyclopedia of Music in Canada, accessed May 24 2007); available from http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/.

[14] The Choral Society and Christ Church kept very close ties even after Fripp left both the Cathedral and The Choral Society to pursue a civil service job. His successor, Frederick Mills also conducted The Choral Society as did many other future Choirmasters of Christ Church up to the turn of the 19th century. In 2007, Matthew Larkin, Choirmaster of Christ Church Cathedral, was named artistic director of the modern inception of The Ottawa Choral Society re-confirming this bond between the two institutions.

With Canada's confederation in 1867 and Queen Victoria's selection of Ottawa as its Capital, the bustling city began to see a rapid increase in population, reaching eighteen thousand by the start of 1868. Christ Church had reached its capacity with regards to membership and at this time they had no plans to increase the size of the church: "... all that was done to the church in the confederation year was to 'grain' its doors, whitewash its interior walls and tune the organ."[15] It took nearly three years before the church began to discuss the problem of space.

Over a series of vestry meetings in 1870 a decision was made to tear down the existing structure and replace it. In 1872, two full years after the initial decision had been made, the church contracted Mr. King Arnoldi as the architect to design the new building. Arnoldi had established himself as a master architect in Ottawa by working with Thomas Fuller on the design of the Parliament Buildings and he also designed St. Alban's Church, Sandy Hill, in "a highly picturesque version of the Gothic style."[16] The style Arnoldi chose for Christ Church was a decorated form of English Gothic design. Pews were sold in advance of the completion of the church as a way of funding the exorbitant cost of the new building.

The last service to be held in the old church was in Spring of 1872 and work began on the new structure that summer. Also in 1872, during the construction of the new church, Frederick Mills, FCO, former professor of the Quebec Academy of Music and Organist of the Quebec Cathedral was chosen to succeed Fripp as Organist

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[15] Hubbard, 31.
[16] Ibid., 33.

and Choirmaster. Mills' first duty as organist was to draw up specifications for a three-manual organ. A 32-rank Warren tracker organ, purchased for $4,500, was installed in 1873, during the final stages of the completion of the building. Funds for the new organ were raised through a series of "parlour concerts, picnics, waxwork shows and sales of Christmas trees."[17] On September 29th, 1873 the church resumed regular services inside the new building.

Despite their fundraising efforts of the previous two years, the proud and vibrant congregation soon had to face the reality of the cost of the new building. This financial crisis was compounded by an economic recession in the 1870s. Subscriptions that were made to the building funds were hard to collect and the church found itself trying desperately to sell off its assets, including property it owned elsewhere in the city, and portions of the land the church building itself was sitting on. Some of the older parishioners put an end to the Sunday afternoon recitals held to raise money for the organ, as their beliefs forbade this type of entertainment on the biblical day of rest. Mills left the church in 1876 for Philadelphia in order to find a stable income. There is no record of the name of the volunteer organist who followed Mills, except for a statement that this successor put "an end to an ambitious repertory of choir music that ranged from Gregorian chant to modern anthems by Spohr and Woodward."[18]

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[17] Ibid., 37. A large number of wax museums and waxwork shows in England and France were established at the end of the 19th century. The subject matter usually ranged from popular culture and the cult of celebrity, but many of these shows focused on the macabre and/or horror. Hubbard refers to these "waxwork shows" as a common event at Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa, although he does not give detail as to what the subjects of the shows were.

[18] Ibid., 41.

As the recession lifted, the pace of parish life began to revive. Regular visits by Governor General Lord Dufferin, and later Governor General The Marquis of Lorne, whose wife, Princess Louise, was the first member of the royal family to reside in Canada, gave Christ Church a lasting connection with the royal family.

Finances gradually improved and in 1879 the church was able to offer John W. F. Harrison (c. 1847-1935) the position of organist and choirmaster, which he retained for seven years until he left the Cathedral for Toronto in 1886. The organist that would follow Harrison was Dingley Brown, who was also head of the Canadian College of Music in Ottawa. On Christmas Day 1891, the choir of ladies and gentlemen was discontinued and a decision was made to introduce a choir of only men and boys' voices, and by the early months of 1892 Brown formed a choir of boys' voices who joined with the men of the previous mixed choir, and thereby established the first incarnation of the Men and Boys' Choir of the Cathedral.[19] The introduction of the all male choir was received with mixed feelings from members of both the congregation and clergy. It is recorded that Lauder, rector of the parish, attended all the boys' rehearsals, presumably to keep a close watch on Brown, and to decide whether or not he would support this new format.[20] Choral communion and sung Matins alternated on Sundays, with Litany on the fifth Sunday and weekly Evensong, a routine which continued until 1986.

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[19] Ibid., 43. The choir of Men and Boys' is considered one choir, although the boys did rehearse separately during the week. This is common in the Choir School tradition found in many parts of Great Britain. The boys would occasionally appear on their own, but the connection between them and the men's voices is always assumed.

[20] Ibid.

In 1896, Charles Hamilton, the first Bishop of the newly formed Diocese of Ottawa, announced that the parish of Christ Church would become the cathedral of the diocese, and Lauder was named the first dean. Through the turn of the 20th century, choral music continued to flourish at the newly established Cathedral. Arthur Dorey, who was also a composer of anthems and service music, was appointed as organist in 1900 and led the choir through services marking the death of both the Cathedral's first dean in 1900 and memorial tributes marking Queen Victoria's death in 1901. The death of Dean Lauder marked the end of an era of unprecedented growth, both of the city of Ottawa and of the parish of Christ Church.

The period following the death of Dean Lauder is described by Hubbard as one of "quiet recovery". The office of the dean was left empty until late 1901 when Henry Kittson (1848-1925) was inducted. The Cathedral began work on a memorial tribute to Lauder in the form of a church school building combined with a parish hall, something that Lauder always desired to have. Lauder Hall was inaugurated in 1903.[21] Modifications to the Cathedral over the next decade included the installation of electric lighting in 1907, and the new tile pavement in the centre aisle, dedicated to long-time parishioner Newell Bate.[22]

Musical life in the parish continued to flourish under Dorey's leadership. In 1905, a young chorister named Samuel Short joined the choir, and remained a chorister for nearly sixty years, becoming the longest standing member of the choir

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[21] Ibid., 53.
[22] Ibid.

on record. He developed a close friendship with Dorey as evident by this humorous story he shared with Hubbard:

> [Samuel Short] used to tell how, during long sermons by visiting clerics, Dorey the organist would give him the sign to drop a hymn-book on the floor as a gentle reminder of the passage of time.[23]

The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 was met with a large response by men of the parish who enlisted for active duty, as is evident by the number of casualties listed on the memorial plaque in the narthex of the Cathedral. Throughout the war, the Cathedral held regular services of intercession, which were attended regularly by the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, and later the Devonshires. At the end of the war, the colours of the 1st Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade were laid up in the cathedral, and after five more such deposits, the church was named the Cathedral of the Canadian Armed Forces. Records do not indicate a significant impact on the music program during the outbreak of war, but it is assumed that the number of boys' voices in the choir would not have been severely affected, as they would have been too young to be enlisted. It is likely that the men's voices would have seen some fluctuation in numbers over the next four years, but no significant mention of it is made.

Following Arthur Dorey's death in 1921, J. Hughes Johnson was named his successor as Organist and Choir Director. Over the course of the five years that Johnson was organist, he modernized the Warren tracker organ by installing electro-pneumatic action, added twelve new stops and a new console of 'horse-shoe' design,

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[23] Ibid., 55.

which was a popular design for the cinema organ of the time. Hubbard notes that these upgrades to the organ were done very poorly, and the organ required much servicing over the next few years.[24] Besides a concert given by the choir of boys from Westminster Abbey and men from St. George's Chapel, both of which took place in the Cathedral in 1927, no specific references to the music program are found in the archives, and there do not appear to have been significant changes in the Cathedral's music program under Johnson. Furthermore, little is said about his successor, George Crawford, except that he was primarily a singing teacher, and not an experienced organist.[25]

In 1927, talks began in the parish to consider a major renovation of the Cathedral, which included replacing and extending the chancel to the original design of Arnoldi, and to replace the dilapidated furnace and organ. It was not until 1932 that a fund raising campaign was created to see these projects through to their completion. This coincided with the hiring of Godfrey Hewitt from England as their new Organist and Choirmaster, who would oversee the design of the new organ.

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[24] Hubbard, 57.
[25] Ibid., 59.

Godfrey Hewitt

Background

Born in Cudworth, Yorkshire, England in 1909, John Lemuel Godfrey Hewitt was a prodigious musical talent from a very young age. His mother recounts: "He always toddled to the piano when I had been singing a new tune to him and worked the theme out accurately with one finger."[26] His parents enrolled him with an elementary music teacher, whom he soon outgrew, and he quickly developed an interest in composition. Before he reached the age of twelve, Hewitt had arranged the music of a song which received high acclaim from an audience at a local concert.[27]

In 1922, Hewitt left school to work in a colliery office. However, family friends managed to persuade his parents to send him to study with Albert Tysoe, the distinguished organist of Leeds Parish Church. While with Tysoe in 1924, and at the age of 15, Hewitt was appointed organist of Cudworth Parish Church. A journalist at the Yorkshire Evening Post notes that at a concert marking his new employment, he played music that "would tax severely the abilities of more experienced players."[29] The program included the *Toccata and Fugue in D minor* of Bach, and Louis Vierne's *Carillon*, learned by the young Hewitt "after a very brief acquaintance with the score."[30]

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[26] "Organist at 15. The Boy Prodigy of Cudworth Parish Church," *Yorkshire Evening Post*, September 28 1925.
[27] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] "Organist at 15. The Boy Prodigy of Cudworth Parish Church."

Hewitt made an immediate impression on the congregation of the parish church in Cudworth. The Vicar of Cudworth at the time noted that "the great thing about his playing is his sympathy; he never overburdens the hymn or psalms with too ponderous a volume. There is no doubt about Godfrey's genius."[31] Dr. Tysoe had also predicted a fine future for the young organist: "He plays difficult compositions in a masterly manner and gets them up in a surprisingly short time. It seems to be born in him, and, if all goes as it should, he will yet do great things."[32]

In 1929 Hewitt left his childhood home of Yorkshire to move south to Buller's Wood in Chislehurst, Kent. Here he became one of the first students at the newly founded School of English Church Music, later to become the Royal School of Church Music. Founded in 1927 by the Organist of Westminster Abbey, Sydney Nicholson, the College of St. Nicholas[33] offered Hewitt a then rare opportunity to immerse himself in all aspects of the liturgy and music of the Church of England. It was this education that most shaped the influence he had at Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa, and in turn in the Anglican Church of Canada as a whole.

Nicholson, Warden of the college he founded, soon became a dominant force in Hewitt's development. Nothing escaped Nicholson's critical ear, yet his zest and energy proved particularly addictive for the young student. Under Nicholson's tutelage, in July 1930 Hewitt completed the requirements for a Fellowship Diploma of the Royal College of Organists with the Limpus Prize for the highest marks across

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[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.
[33] The College of St. Nicholas was the early name given to the Royal School of Church Music.

England and also he won the much-coveted Lafontaine Prize at the College of St. Nicholas.

In 1930, Hewitt served as Organist for the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace. Shortly afterwards, in 1931, he was offered two jobs in two countries: Westminster Abbey in London, England, and Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa, Canada. Westminster Abbey, a centre of choral church music, and arguably the most prestigious church in England, offered him the position of Assistant Organist. Christ Church offered him a full time position as Organist and Master of the Choristers at the relatively new Cathedral in Canada's Capital. Hewitt turned down Westminster's offer in favour of a new life in a new country.

Hewitt followed the footsteps of other great English composers who had taken residence in Canada, including Canada's most famous practitioner of Anglican church music, Healey Willan, who had moved from England to Toronto in 1913 some twenty years before Hewitt. Hewitt's arrival however marked the beginning of a new era in Ottawa's church music history. He further exposed the church and the city to the English tradition of church music, including the preservation of Gregorian chant, and he introduced composers such as Herbert Howells, Harold Darke, and other early 20th century British composers to their community. His influence on the practice of organ performance encouraged a new generation of organists, an influence which would be felt across Canada. He also brought with him liturgical traditions like the famous Christmas Carol Services as performed by King's College Cambridge to the small, yet expanding Cathedral Church.

1930s and 1940s.

Despite the volatile economy during the economic recession of the 1930s, the first years after Hewitt was hired as Organist and Choirmaster of Christ Church were a very exciting time. In 1932, the 100th anniversary of the congregation, the Cathedral had undertaken major renovations to build the new chancel, which would include larger choir stalls and a new high altar, extending the church by approximately 30 meters. Included in the renovation was a major rebuild of the pipe organ. As noted earlier, the old organ, purchased in 1872 from the Warren Company of Montreal, was a three manual tracker organ with 32 stops. Over the course of its first 30 years, the organ had been rebuilt three separate times. In Hewitt's first year as Cathedral Organist he specified a complete rebuild of the instrument by Casavant Frères Ltée in St-Hyacinthe, Quebec. The new organ made use of twenty-two of the original Warren stops from 1872 but added an additional twelve stops and a new console. The new instrument allowed Hewitt to begin a recital series at the church, and also to build up a studio of young organ students, both of which encouraged greater interest in the instrument and in church music in general throughout the Ottawa area.

The climate of change at the Cathedral in these years brought with it hope of an invigorated choral program, organ recitals and a sense of new found energy. Unfortunately the relationship between Hewitt and the Churchwardens, who oversaw the day to day use of the church and managed the finances, proved somewhat strained in the early years of Hewitt's tenure. There are numerous letters from the

Churchwardens in the Cathedral's archives that seem less than supportive or encouraging towards their enthusiastic new organist.

Many of these letters have an edge of authority on matters such as his uniform, or vestments, as well as financial concerns over proposed concerts in the church. The first of these letters is dated 17th of November, 1932 and expresses a lack of confidence in Hewitt's new plan to continue with his concert series which he began the year before. It also details payment the concert series must return to the church. Although Hewitt had voluntarily undertaken the responsibility of any financial loss that might incur through the series, the Churchwardens seem almost to be discouraging the idea – or at best, putting up roadblocks to their continuance.[34]

November 17th 1932

Dear Mr. Hewitt

We have fully considered your suggestions regarding the four Organ Recitals which you wish to give at the Cathedral during the coming winter. We are glad that we can look forward to hearing the new organ and to testing its possibilities, and we are confident that many of those who have subscribed towards the building of it would welcome such an opportunity. At the same time we must admit frankly that we are not so confident regarding the financial outlay involved. As you are personally undertaking to assume any financial loss that may be involved we feel that this must be a matter which rests with your own judgment; at the same time we feel that it is due to you to say that we think the loss (especially if the expenditure to the extent which you propose is incurred) will be considerable.

As Churchwardens, responsible for the balancing of the budget of the church, we find that we must make a charge of $15.00 at each recital to cover the cost of heating, lighting, etc. This is quite a moderate estimate of the actual expense involved. As we were at a considerable financial loss from the recitals you kindly gave last winter, we feel it incumbent upon us, in the

[34] It is interesting to note that one of the Churchwardens in the early 1930s was F.E.S. Grout, who was listed as a chorister in the church records during Arthur Dorey's tenure as Organist and Choirmaster at the Cathedral. The tone of the letters which follow in this document could be linked to Grout's rapport with Dorey and his reluctance to conform with the new ideas that Hewitt brought to the church.

interests of those who contribute to the running expenses of the Church, to make this charge.

We further take this opportunity of suggesting to you that the number of those who attend the recitals would probably be greater if the recitals were not broadcast; if Miss Millar were omitted from the program a saving of $40.00 would be made, and to ourselves personally (whatever the inclination of others) the recitals would be equally acceptable without the addition of other artists such as you suggest. However as you are accepting any loss from the undertaking, we feel that these matters are for your own decision, we merely express these opinions for your guidance.

Should you decide to give these recitals, you can have the assurance that we shall gladly do what little we can to encourage a good attendance.

We observe that in your estimate of expenses you have not made any provision [whatsoever] for advertising. It seems to us that some expenditure for this purpose will be required.

Churchwardens.[35]

In another letter dated on the 7th of December, 1932, the Churchwardens address issues relating to service music, as well as the clothes and vestments that Hewitt would be required to wear during all services. It seems that the Churchwardens again felt the need to impose an authoritative role over the young twenty-three year old cathedral organist:

December 7th, 1932

Dear Mr. Hewitt,

As we are approaching the date fixed for the re-opening of the Chancel, the congregation are anticipating with much pleasure the resumption of organ accompaniment to our Services. The members of the congregation are keenly interested in the music part of the Services, and to most of them it means much as an aid to their worship.

Among other important matters brought before the board of management at their meeting held last week, were several matters concerning the musical part of our Services, and we have been instructed to request your attention to several points of detail, and to request your compliance therewith.

Firstly:- That you will please wear a cassock and surplice and a white (starched) collar, at all Services.

Secondly:- That you provide suitable music during the taking up of the Offertory until it has been presented at the Altar; and also while the preacher returns from the pulpit to the choir.[36]

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[35] Churchwardens to Godfrey Hewitt, Ottawa, 17 November, 1932, transcript typewritten by F.E.S. Grout and M. G. Powell, Churchwardens, Anglican Diocese of Ottawa Archives, Ottawa.

Thirdly:- That you play suitable voluntaries for ten minutes before the Services commence.

While these details may not be of much importance regarded from a technical point of view, they are, as we have suggested, of real moment in helping to create an 'atmosphere' that will aid the people in their worship.

Yours very truly,
(Sgd.) F.E.S. Grout.
" M. G. Powell.
Churchwardens.[37]

The economic recession of the mid-1930's began to impact extra spending in the church, as well as considerations of contract changes. Hewitt was asked to perform funeral services without the extra fee that he had negotiated in his original contract with the church. This announcement was made in a letter dated February 27th, 1934. Also in this letter is the first mention of restrictions being placed on Hewitt's use of the organ for private lessons.

February 27th, 1934.

Dear Mr. Hewitt,

There is a matter in connection with the use of the organ to which we wish to call to your attention.

It frequently happens that someone dies who has been a member of the congregation for many years, and who, perhaps, has devoted himself to the cause of the Church and parish. In such cases the family in which the death has occurred often wish to have organ music at the funeral, and they feel that, as members of the congregation, they are entitled to the Services of the Church – both of Clergy and of the organist – without fee or charge. You will see how impossible it often is to refuse such a request or to demand a fee for such services.

Our attention has been called to the fact that our contract with you entitles you to a fee of five dollars for playing at funerals. We feel, however,

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[36] Frances Macdonnell, interview by author, August 2006, Ottawa, Ontario, typewritten transcript. In August of 2006, the author had the opportunity to interview Frances Macdonnell, one of Hewitt's top organ students, and his successor as Choirmaster and Organist of the Cathedral. She helped shed some light on Hewitt's first years at the Cathedral. Macdonnell states that these two suggestions were likely made to Hewitt as a result of his dislike of early mornings. Hewitt lived next door to the Cathedral and Macdonnell suggested that he would arrive for the morning service only moments before it began, quickly putting on a choir robe over his sleep-wear.

[37] Churchwardens to Godfrey Hewitt, Ottawa, 7 December, 1932, transcript typewritten by F.E.S. Grout and M. G. Powell, Churchwardens, Anglican Diocese of Ottawa Archives, Ottawa.

> that it is necessary to rescind this part of the agreement, which causes annoyance and embarrassment at a time which the Church, particularly, should show sympathy and consideration.
>
> We therefore ask you to be responsible for presiding at the organ at funerals when requested to do so by the Rector, as part of your official duty, without fee, except when it is offered voluntarily.
>
> If you will let us know how many funerals there have been recently at which you have officiated and for which you have not received any fee, we shall be glad to offer you remuneration from the funds of the parish.
>
> We wish also to refer to the use of the organ for instruction and practice by your pupils. We feel that not only should such instructional practice be of reasonable extent, but also that it should be restricted to reasonable hours of the day or evening.
>
> Yours faithfully,
> Churchwardens[38]

The recession also made it difficult for the choir to sustain a solid membership, and those who were able to attend the church on a regular basis could not afford simple luxuries, like the black dress shoes, that were required to meet the dress code of a cathedral chorister. Hewitt took it upon himself to start a shoe allowance in order to properly dress the feet of the young choristers. Macdonnell comments on the low income housing situation in an area of Ottawa close to the Cathedral known as LeBreton Flats, from which more that half of the choirboys were drawn. Their working class families could not afford to purchase dress shoes. Organ lessons were also given to area organists, many of whom paid Hewitt no fee, and in exchange these young musicians would sing in the Cathedral choir. Hewitt's generosity towards the young musicians was extremely admirable, and many people benefited greatly from this type of instruction.

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[38] Churchwardens to Godfrey Hewitt, Ottawa, 27 February, 1934, transcript typewritten by the Churchwardens, Anglican Diocese of Ottawa Archives, Ottawa.

[40] This portion of the letter was to be left on the organ console for all users to read.

However, based on several of the letters from the churchwardens cited here, this generosity was not extended to the use of the organ. In two letters dated five weeks apart the Churchwardens lay out specific rules for the use of the organ by Hewitt's organ students. The first letter suggests that a list of names be presented to the Churchwardens, so that they are made aware of who had been approved to practice on the instrument, and that a fee be charged to all other persons who wish to practice on the organ. The second letter places time restrictions on the use of the instrument for practice by both students of Hewitt, and other organists in the city.

February 28th, 1935

Dear Mr. Hewitt,

I am enclosing herewith a copy of a Notice which will be placed on the Organ. It is necessary that some control be exercised with respect both to the use of the Organ and to the expense involved thereby. The cost of maintenance and operation is mounting by leaps and bounds, and it seems hardly fair that such expense should be borne by the Church at large. I am aware that the Organ is available for use by your bona-fide pupils, and it is not the intention of the new requirements to interfere with this arrangement except in cases where the privilege may be abused. I would suggest that you advise the Churchwardens from time to time of the names of your bona-fide pupils so that there should be no misunderstanding in the operation of the new requirements.

I understand that one Party now using the Organ does so for such lengthy periods and with such considerable volume that people wishing to use the Church for quiet meditation are discouraged from so doing. This situation has to be controlled and I would suggest that you exercise your authority in this regard.

Yours very truly,
Churchwarden.

Copy[40]

On and after March 1st 1935, a charge of One Dollar per hour will be made for the use of the Organ other than by persons officially appointed. A book is

> provided for the purpose of recording names and times.[41] Accounts will be rendered and payable monthly. This charge (which does not cover cost of maintenance and operation) is not to be [construed] as a rental. Use of the Organ must be regarded as a privilege and not as a right. Permission must be given by the Organist, and such permission is subject to further approval of the Dean and Churchwardens. The organ shall be used only at such times as are approved by the Dean. Any damage resulting from such use will be assessed against the responsible party.[42]

Further reference to the use of the organ by students is outlined in a letter dated April 4th ,1935.

> April 4th 1935.
>
> Dear Mr. Hewitt,
>
> With further reference to the use of the organ, the Dean and Churchwardens have decided that a maximum of two hours per week be permitted to your bona-fide pupils during such weeks as they receive lessons from you.
>
> It is further deemed desirable that the maximum of two hours be spread over as few periods as possible.
>
> Use of the Organ beyond the prescribed maximum or for other than your pupils, shall not in the future be permitted.
>
> Miss Jeans,[43] as assistant organist, will not be subject to the decisions above mentioned. …
>
> Yours sincerely,
> Churchwarden.[44]

There is also evidence that in the early years of Hewitt's tenure the number of choristers in the choir was declining rapidly, in particular the adult men who made up the alto, tenor and bass voices of the choir. Rehearsals for the choirboys were held on Monday and Thursday nights for the junior boys (under 11 years old), and Tuesdays

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[41] It is interesting to note that this book remained on the organ console until in 1980 when Macdonnell had it removed. It was still asking for $1 per hour, however Macdonnell notes that hardly anyone was paying it.

[42] Churchwardens to Godfrey Hewitt, Ottawa, 28 February, 1935, transcript typewritten by the Churchwardens, Anglican Diocese of Ottawa Archives, Ottawa.

[43] Lilian Forsyth (nee Jeans) later became organist at Knox Presbyterian Church, Ottawa. An annual scholarship of $2,000 for young organists is still awarded in her name.

[44] Churchwardens to Godfrey Hewitt, Ottawa, 4 April, 1935, transcript typewritten by a Churchwarden, Anglican Diocese of Ottawa Archives, Ottawa.

and Fridays for the senior boys. The adults were only required to attend for a short while on Friday evenings, and on Sunday mornings. As a result, the adults were expected to have a high ability of musicianship, limiting the numbers capable of singing in the choir. After the boys' voices had changed, little encouragement was given for teenage boys to continue singing in the choir. The continuation of the above letter from the Churchwardens advises Hewitt on ways to solve this problem.

> … There was considerable discussion about the Choir at the meeting last evening. Personally, I want to be helpful. Is there no possibility of combining the practices of the boys and men? I know the difficulties with respect to obtaining new voices, but we must make another effort. Have you approached any of the ex-choir boys. They may not be much good for a while, but the potentialities are there.[45]

It was not the practice in major Cathedral choirs of men and boys' voices throughout England to encourage changed or changing voices to continue to sing in the choir, although the potential for this type of instruction would likely have had lasting benefits to a choral program such as this.[46]

Hewitt's resiliency towards the interference of the Churchwardens in these first few years is to be commended. He was able to push his own ideas forward while still maintaining a good relationship with the church, and in due time created his own personal stamp on the music program which saw a lasting effect on the church throughout his tenure at the Cathedral.

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[45] Ibid.

[46] It was not until after 1980 when Frances Macdonnell was appointed Organist and Choirmaster at the Cathedral that many steps were made to encourage them to continue singing in the choir. This will be discussed later in this paper.

Prior to WWII, Hewitt had planned for his second renovation of the church's pipe organ. These plans were actually specifications that Hewitt wanted completed in the original 1932 design of the organ, but were downsized at the time due to the economic depression of the 1930s, and put on hold until the church could raise the funds to complete the project. After the end of WWII in 1945 the rebuild of the organ resumed. In the correspondences between Hewitt and Casavant Frères Ltée, the organ building company hired to complete these renovations, we get a sense of both the urgency with which Hewitt wanted the renovations to be completed, and the complications involved in acquiring the materials which were in short supply at the end of the war.

The following letter dated February 7th, 1945 describes the condition of the existing organ, the specifications of the new machinery needed to power the instrument, and the total cost of the upgrade.

February 7, 1945

Dear Mr. Hewitt,

> Furthering our conversations during the writer's recent visit to the Cathedral he begs to report as follows:- The completion of the organ as per the specifications on dated July 4th 1932 will, in the first place, necessitate the installation of a new blower of 5 H.P. to furnish the pressure of at least 10 inches water column for the Tuba and about 7 inches pressure for the three new Swell chorus reeds, and Pedal Trombone 16'. The existing blower is the old original outfit constructed of wood and was considered in 1932 as being adequate and reasonably safe to use again for the partial organ of around 35 stops. It is of 3 H.P. and we believe it has proved to be adequate since the instrument has been used. However, blowers in wooden casings have long since been abandoned by us and by many others for outfits entirely of steel and iron.

> To complete the organ therefore with a new 5 H.P. blower, supply and install the stops (for which spaces were left) … will amount to $3,265.00. …
> Very Truly yours,
> CASAVANT FRERES LTEE.[47]

Over the course of 1945, the church's vestry council met a number of times to discuss the financial obligations and eventually agreed to go ahead with the completion of the organ as per Hewitt's request and Casavant Frères recommendations.

In January 9th, 1946, nearly a full year after the first letter was sent regarding the renovation, Hewitt contacted Casavant to inquire about a possible completion date. A telegram was wired back to Hewitt with the following announcement: "REGRET CANNOT PROMISE COMPLETION OF ORGAN UNTIL EASTER OF NEXT YEAR. LETTER FOLLOWING."[48] The letter that followed outlined in greater detail the complications that they were dealing with including the continued restrictions on essential materials following the war.

> January 9th 1946
>
> Dear Mr. Hewitt
>
> … our list of signed contracts already ahead of us will keep us more than busy until May and June of 1947, and even this is based on the assumption that Government restrictions on essential materials will be eased or (we hope) entirely lifted as this new year unfolds. As the project therefore at the Cathedral is not a complete new organ, we could probably work it in between other contracts, but Easter 1947 is the very earliest we can promise under the existing conditions. This, the writer knows, will be a great disappointment to you but there is no use in promising anything we cannot carry out.

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[47] Casavant Frères Ltée to Godfrey Hewitt, 7 February 1945, transcript typewritten by a representative of Casavant Frères Ltée, Anglican Diocese of Ottawa Archives, Ottawa.
[48] Casavant Frères Ltée to Godfrey Hewitt, 3 January 1946, telegram by a representative of Casavant Frères Ltée, Anglican Diocese of Ottawa Archives, Ottawa.

With best personal wishes for 1946, we are
Very Truly yours,
CASAVANT FRERES LTEE.[49]

The Cathedral replied back to Casavant on February 28th 1946 requesting a contract of the work to be completed at the agreed amount of $3,265. A letter was returned from Casavant only five days later, dated March 5th 1946, with accompanying contracts, and the following amendment to their original expected date of completion:

March 5th 1946

Dear Sir

[...]

Now with regard to the date of completion, we must explain that since our reply to Mr. Hewitt's telegram of January 8th 1946 we have signed up a number of contracts and, as our delivery sheet follows strictly the order in which actual contracts are received, we doubt very much if we could promise the delivery for Easter 1947. We have therefore set the date as June 1947 on the Agreement form, but if we can better this date we will be only too pleased to do so.

Another matter of grave importance to organ-builders in Canada and in the U.S.A. is the restriction on the very necessary metal in organ-pipe construction viz – ingot tin. The Government of both countries have not yet lifted this war-time ban and organ-builders are greatly delayed in consequence. We have three large organs (each larger than the Christchurch [sic] instrument) promised for delivery last September and October. They are still postponed indefinitely due to the amount of tin they will take in their construction. This will explain the special clause we have been obliged to insert in all of our Agreement forms during the past three years.

However, we again assure you that we will do our very best under these trying circumstances to complete your organ as soon as possible. ...

Very truly yours,
CASAVANT FRERES LTEE.[50]

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[49] Casavant Frères Ltée to Godfrey Hewitt, 9 January 1946, transcript typewritten by a representative of Casavant Frères Ltée, Anglican Diocese of Ottawa Archives, Ottawa.
[50] Casavant Frères Ltée to Christ Church Cathedral, 5 March 1946, transcript typewritten by a representative of Casavant Frères Ltée, Anglican Diocese of Ottawa Archives, Ottawa.

Over the course of 1946, the Cathedral waited with great anticipation for arrival of the new materials to complete the organ. There was much correspondence between Casavant Frères Limited and the Churchwardens about the specifics and the delivery date. The post-war economic boom had an adverse effect however on the capabilities of the organ-builder, especially with regard to the wages of their employees and the cost of the materials to complete the project. In a long letter dated January 30th 1947, only six months before the expected delivery date of the organ, Casavant outlined these problems, and asked the Cathedral to renegotiate the original contract with regard to the final sale price.

January 30th 1947

Dir Sir:-

During the past two or three weeks we have found it very necessary to make a thorough financial survey of the contracts signed during 1945 and 1946, or at least those which have not been actually cancelled by us due to the Government's restrictions on essential materials in accordance with a special clause which each contract carried. …

The estimate for the work on the Christ Church Cathedral organ was made in February 1945 and, was, of course, based on the prevailing list of nearly two years ago. Almost a year passed before we had a reply regarding our quotation sent through your organist Mr. Godfrey Hewitt on Feb. 7th, 1945. He wired us on Jan. 9th, 1946 regarding delivery of the proposed work and we replied by wire and letter of the same date that we could not see our way clear to make a delivery until Easter of 1947. We referred also in that letter to the restrictions on essential materials which were so grave – and still are.

Eventually a letter was received from you under date of Feb. 28th, 1946, requesting that we draw up the proposals in contract form as per our quotation of Feb. 7th, 1945 of $3,265.00. This we did on March 5th, and the forms were signed by both parties by April 3, 1946.

Soon after this date we had to grant a substantial raise in wages of our entire staff, and prices of materials began to soar. We hesitated to apprise you of this, preferring rather to abide by our contract. No mention of it was made

> either in our letter of September 11, 1946 signed by Mr. C.J. Laframboise. Before the end of 1946, however, we were forced by the local Union to grant another substantial raise in wages to all our employees, and these facts, coupled with the increases in the prices of materials since our original estimate was made in the beginning of 1945, show in our survey that we will have to face a loss of $700.00 on that contract. We are therefore writing to ascertain if the Cathedral authorities would consider meeting us half way in the dilemma by allowing us an extra of $350.00 on our contract price.
>
> Very truly yours,
> CASAVANT FRERES LTEE.[51]

The Cathedral agreed to this contract revision, and added the $350 to the original contract price. The organ renovations took place starting in June of 1946, and were completed by the fall of the same year.

This exchange of correspondence between the Cathedral and Casavant Frères Limited gives us a good understanding of the after effects of WWII, and what role it played on material shortages, increase of wages, and sensitivity of contractual negotiations, and how all of these affected the process of the completion of the organ renovation. The outcome of this work provided the Cathedral with a state of the art instrument which would not need to be redesigned for another twenty years.

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[51] Casavant Frères Ltée to Christ Church Cathedral, 30 January 1947, transcript typewritten by a representative of Casavant Frères Ltée, Anglican Diocese of Ottawa Archives, Ottawa.

1950s and 1960s

The early 1950s saw the most productive years of the music program under the direction of Hewitt. By 1952, the boys' choir had grown to over forty treble voices, and the men's choir had also expanded, providing Hewitt with a well balanced choir of nearly sixty voices.[52] Over the next ten years, with the help of a strong economy and solid membership, the men and boys' choir had found what seemed to be a secure formula for success, and a church that was financially strong. With strong financial backing, Hewitt was able to design and complete his most ambitious renovation of the church's pipe organ, which included Canada's first moveable console, allowing audience members a front stage view of the organist. The concert series that Hewitt informally started when he arrived in Canada in the early 1930s took a new direction. With this new instrument, he was able to contract internationally acclaimed performers, and frequently filled the church with eager patrons interested in world class organ music.

A number of special events occurred through the 1950s and 1960s, with the Cathedral choir being an important component of each of these occasions. The choir began exchange visits with other cathedrals in Ontario and Quebec, including those in Montreal, Toronto and Hamilton. Services at the Cathedral received national attention with appearances on CBC's Sunday afternoon televised services. During this time, Hewitt instituted the Nine Lessons and Carols service at the Cathedral, a tradition that

[52] The reason for the increase in numbers of men's voices in the choir was likely directly related to the increase in the number of boys. It is very common to have had families join the choir as a whole, which would also include both fathers and sons becoming choristers together.

had existed in the Church of England since 1918. Hewitt, just a young boy in England when this carol service tradition began, was very familiar with this service. He adapted the Nine Lessons and Carols Service for use at the Cathedral and also new Advent carol service, such as had been initiated at King's College in 1934 for use on Advent Sunday. These carol services proved to be extremely popular services with the congregations at the Cathedral, and the church was always filled to capacity. Besides these two traditional Advent Carols and Nine Lessons and Carols services, Hewitt created an Easter carol service, which is unique to Christ Church Cathedral. These services are a good example of Hewitt's ingenuity and creativity which he exercised within the sometimes rigid framework of Anglican liturgy. They increased a local awareness of the choral program at the Cathedral, and developed with it an appreciation for traditions which had existed in England for many years.

The Cathedral Boys Choir received recognition as one of the world's finest choirs by music festival judges. In a newspaper article in June of 1964, John Churchill, an adjudicator from London, England, heard the Cathedral choir at the Ottawa Music Festival and commented on its excellent performance, and how well it matched up to the great cathedral choirs from his home country:

> Mr. Churchill praised the courage of Choirmaster Godfrey Hewitt, F.R.C.O., in choosing what he described as "the tremendously difficult Brockless arrangement for 'The Magnificat'." "This particular arrangement is a challenge for even the most high-trained adult choir," said the adjudicator, who spoke of "magnificent work, brilliantly done." ... "I would be proud to hear this choir anywhere, for it must surely be among the very best in the world."[53]

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[53] "Judges Commend Cathedral Boy Choristers," *The Ottawa Journal*, June 1964.

Success in the Ottawa Music Festival continued for not only the choir as a whole, but also for individual choristers who won countless certificates, trophies and scholarships as members of the Cathedral Boys Choir.

One of the most important events in the Cathedral occurred in 1967, Canada's centenary of Confederation, with the visit of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip. A festal service was planned on July 2nd to honour this visit. Hewitt composed a series of new anthems and service music in honour of the visit, and the choir rehearsed for weeks in preparation.[54] However, nothing could have prepared Hewitt or the choir for what was to transpire on that day:

> Just before 11 o'clock, robed and ready, Hewitt took over the organ stool [from his assistant who was playing the prelude music], signalled to the choir and prepared to give them the first chord for their first hymn.
> Outside the church the Queen was arriving and a gust of wind followed by torrential rain lashed the crowds. Inside, the lights went out, and the organ keyboard went dead.[55]

The storm knocked out a high-tension wire a few blocks down from the Cathedral, and word was given that power would not be returned for some time. Hewitt and the Dean decided that the service would have to go on, despite the power failure. All the choral music written and planned for the service had to be omitted, including new settings of all the morning canticles, descants for familiar hymns, and Benjamin Britten's setting of the "Jubilate Deo." Instead the majority of the service was sung

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[54] Over the course of Hewitt's tenure at Christ Church Cathedral, he composed works for use at the Cathedral, including Psalm settings, descants, liturgical music and organ music. Sadly, he never published any of his works, and most of them are now lost. Some music he disposed of after it had been sung a few times, but a few copies of his works remain in his own handwriting in the archives of the Diocese of Ottawa, and the choir library at Christ Church Cathedral, and a number are held at the Library and Archives Canada in the Music Division.

[55] Frank Jones, "Storm Mutes Music Written for Queen," *Toronto Star*, July 4 1967.

without accompaniment. Luckily, the anthem selected was a 17th century work, which was intended to be sung a cappella. When the power finally returned, all that was left to be sung was the Royal Anthem, the final hymn and the postlude, which Hewitt played as if everything had gone just as intended. The journalist reported:

> Mr. Hewitt was still playing Bach's Prelude and Fugue in F minor when the Royal party left the church, but the Queen thoughtfully requested the dean to convey her congratulations to him. What might have been a disaster had become something of a triumph.[56]

Although the economic improvements had spurred the Cathedral choir to new heights in the 1950s and 1960s, by the late 1960s they would prove to have an adverse effect on other aspects of the music program, most notably the enrollment of the choir. It was a well known fact that many parishioners were now in a position to afford to purchase cottages in Ontario's lakeside communities, and they were less willing to commit themselves to the time needed for choir participation.[57]

At the same time, there seemed to be a relaxation with regard to the discipline and expectation of the choir – with regard to both attendance and general behaviour demands. The traditional choir uniform of grey flannels, blue blazers and red ties was changed to more casual dress. Indirectly, the relaxation in discipline and uniform would lead to a more relaxed attitude of the choir in general, contributing to the decline of the music program.

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[56] Jean Southworth, "What Happened When the Organ Failed," *The Ottawa Journal*, July 4 1967.
[57] Frances Macdonnell, "Music and Worship," in *Anglicanism in the Ottawa Valley*, ed. Frank A. Peake (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1997), 166.

A few measures had been put into place in an attempt to re-invigorate the choral program, most notably a scholarship program which was created to encourage boys to join the Cathedral choir. By 1971 there were eighteen $100 scholarships available to individual choirboys who maintained a good standing in attendance and made significant contributions to the choir. Even with this new measure in place, a move from professionalism to extreme amateurism was quickly becoming a reality for the Cathedral Choir.

1970s

A priest who had served in the diocese of Niagara, Edward Downey, moved to Ottawa to accept the position of Dean of the Cathedral. Downey held this position for the next twelve years, through the end of Hewitt's tenure. At this point the situation of membership in the Men and Boys' choir became critical. Downey requested that a few members of the music committee draft a report explaining the situation and outlining some possible solutions that could be presented to the congregation at their annual general meeting. In a ten page report submitted to the parish council in the spring of 1972, the committee outlined their findings:

> In June 1971 no fewer than 20 boys left our choir. With considerable effort and ingenuity Godfrey Hewitt managed to obtain (from music teachers in various Ottawa schools) the names of some 60 boys. Only 18 came forward for an interview and, of them, 12 were selected to replace the 20 who had left.
>
> This was not enough. Neither was the quality of the new boys[']' voices sufficient to maintain the high standards of our Cathedral Choir. Most of them came from families outside the Cathedral Parish and from other religious denominations. Many of them lived a long distance from the Cathedral itself.
>
> Several of these new boys left within a few weeks – one of them came to only one choir practice and never returned! – mainly on account of transportation difficulties, coupled with the fact that they must attend choir practices every Tuesday and Friday afternoon, as well as attending two services and additional choir practice on Sundays … in spite of strenuous efforts to replace [the boys who left], not one boy with sufficient aptitude has been found, either from the Cathedral Parish or from elsewhere, and we now face the definite prospect that there will be no choir at all for the 1972/73 season which starts on September 10th. The membership has been reduced to 5/6 men and 7/8 boys of doubtful quality and this is quite inadequate.[58]

Recruitment and attendance of the choir had dropped to the lowest it had been since Hewitt began working at the Cathedral. Causes for the problem are cited in the report as being related to problems of transportation, the frequency of rehearsals and

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[58] *Christ Church Cathedral* (Ottawa: Christ Church Cathedral, 1971), Music Committee Report.

services, and the lack of a large residential district in close proximity of the church.[59] The report also alludes to a general lack of commitment and sense of obligation from parents of new choirboys, as well as men of the choir.[60]

In the same report, the committee suggests a possible solution, by comparing the Cathedral's situation with that of other churches, both in England and across Canada:

> We live … in a time of change. New problems and new ideas, which were unknown and unthinkable a generation ago, confront us now and we have to face realistically the challenges of a changing society.
>
> In the United Kingdom, where the tradition of fine church music has been so deeply entrenched for centuries, changes are already taking place. All Saints' Church, St. Margaret St., London, for example, has abandoned its boys choir and has replaced it with a small group of professional singers. Other churches are doing the same and more will likely follow in the future.
>
> The same trend, too, can be discerned in Canada. Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver, will not only be getting a new building – it has also got a new choir! They too have opted for a professional group. All Saints', Winnipeg, is reporting to be having serious difficulties in retaining its choir and may decide to go the same way.[61]

The report draws from these examples and suggests the possibility of hiring a group of professional singers. This suggestion does not come without precedent, as a group had been formed for the purpose of singing at a wedding later that year where the couple requested a full choir, which at that time the church did not possess. This ad hoc choir was to provide music at this wedding, and also a subsequent special service

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[59] Macdonnell mentions that the low income housing on the LeBreton Flats, mentioned in an earlier footnote in this paper, was demolished at this time, removing the source of many choristers.
[60] An extreme example of this statement is given when at the Easter morning service in 1971, considered to be the most important feast day in the Christian calendar, Hewitt showed up to begin the morning choir practice, and no choristers were present.
[61] *Christ Church Cathedral.*

at which the Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada was to be present. The choir was conducted by a former head chorister of the Cathedral, Bill Bowen, who at the time was serving as a paid soloist at another local church. Cathedral records indicate that the members of this choir were all university aged choristers drawn from local community choirs, such as the Cantata Singers, the Ottawa Choral Society, and the Ontario Youth Choir. In the same report, the music committee suggests that this new choir could be contracted on either a permanent basis, or on a one season trial basis beginning in the early fall. They also note the importance of making a decision quickly, before Bowen is lost to a continuing position:

> This group could sing at the Cathedral on a permanent basis, or on an experimental basis for one season commencing on October 1st, 1972. However, a decision would have to be made before September 29th when Bill Bowen is due to renew his contract with the Christian Science Church.[62]

Along with the suggestion of hiring a professional student choir, which could destroy the eighty years of tradition established by the Men and Boys' choir, the committee outlined in their report three alternatives which would make use of the current boys' choir, while still incorporating a mixed choir in some form to create the stability needed to continue with a viable music program:[63]

> The following alternative courses of action to meet this crisis appear to be viable and therefore are worth of consideration:
>
> 1. Maintain the boy's and men's choir for Evensong for 7 months of the year. … Engage a professional group for Morning services throughout the season viz. for 10 months. This group could also be called upon to sing for special occasions as required.

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[62] Ibid.

[63] It is not clear at this point in the report as to what Hewitt's role would be with the formation of this new choir. At one point in the report it states that Bowen would "lead" the group, but that Hewitt would be appointed "director" of the group.

> The advantages of this proposal would be the preservation of the nucleus of a Cathedral choir which could conceivably be reconstituted at some future time; an up-grading of the standard of music at the Evening Service which might increase attendance but would certainly make the services more attractive; and the provision of a first-rate choir to sing for the Morning Service with the ability to perform many beautiful but difficult works, beyond the capability of our present choir.
>
> The boys would only be required to attend choir practices one day a week (instead of two) and need only attend on Sunday afternoons for the 4:30 p.m. service.
>
> 2. Maintain the boy's and men's choir for one Sunday each month, the remaining Sundays being filled by a Professional Group. Evensong would be sung, (as at present), by the boys only for 8 months of the year.
>
> This has certain attractions to commend it, but it has the disadvantage of necessitating more attendance by the boys than the previous proposal and probably some retainer would have to be paid to the group for the Sunday they were not required. Therefore it would be more costly in time (for the choirboys) and in money (for the Professional Singers).
>
> 3. Provide a mixed choir (i.e. boys, women and men) from our own resources. This should be possible if a real effort were made, although it is doubtful whether sufficient volunteers would be willing to give enough time for choir practices and church attendance on Sundays; and whether we could attain a sufficiently high standard of singing.[64]

The final recommendation of the committee is to support the first option from the above: "- namely, to engage a Professional Group of singers … for one season only … and to endeavor to maintain the nucleus of a boy's and men's choir for Evensong." Financially, this new choir would add over $2,727 to the $10,000 budget assigned for music related expenses at the Cathedral, and would require a fee of $20 per service to the leader of the group (Bowen), and $7.50 per service to each chorister of the

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[64] *Christ Church Cathedral.* It might seem to the reader that directions given in this report are disrespectful towards the ability of Hewitt to keep the standard of his men and boys' choir to the levels that they were used to. It is important to understand that at this time there was an immediate need to resolve the issues of a declining membership and there are no recorded statements of animosity between Hewitt and this committee. It is more likely that Hewitt himself played a large role helping the committee to come to these conclusions, and supported the resolutions as an attempt to resurrect the choral program at the Cathedral.

ensemble. It was also recommended that the current eighteen scholarships of $100 be reduced to twelve scholarships of $50 for the choirboys, and that travel expenses for all the boy choristers be covered at a rate of $1 a week.[65]

The church's decision makers, known as Vestry, accepted the committee's overall recommendation and in the fall of 1972, a mixed Student Choir took over all Sunday morning services at the Cathedral. It was thought that in due time the Men and Boys' choir would be dismantled and the student choir would become the only choir of the Cathedral. The number of choirboys decreased to seven or eight in number, and the men to about a half a dozen. Hewitt continued working with the men and boys choir on a completely volunteer basis.[66] The small ensemble sang mainly for evensongs, and was otherwise used sparingly throughout the next eight years. Hewitt's repertoire choices for the choir were centered mainly on a revival of early 16th century English Tudor anthems which were sung a cappella. Once a month, the Men and Boys' choir would sing at the Sunday morning service. They would perform short anthems and motets, while the Student Choir sang the liturgical parts of the service from the gallery, or balcony, of the church. These services became known as 'Gallery Services'.

Changes to the choirs in the 1970s must be seen as positive, for although the membership of the men and boys' choir fluctuated in size, in this period never

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[65] Ibid.

[66] The volunteer time that Hewitt took to work with the men and boys choir can not be understated. If it were not for his dedication and commitment, it would have been unlikely that the men and boys choir tradition would have survived. Macdonnell describes this act as nothing less than a miracle.

reaching the number of choristers they had in the 1950s, the Cathedral managed to maintain sufficient voices to continue the solid musical traditions established by Hewitt.

In 1974, the mixed Student Choir and the choir of Men and Boys joined forces under Hewitt's direction, creating a mix of adult women's voices and boy sopranos, as well as male countertenors and female contraltos for the upper parts. Hewitt managed to maintain a core of boys' voices in the choir. The boys still rehearsed separately through the week, and then together with the rest of the choir on Sunday mornings.

The relationship between Dean Downey and Hewitt was reported to be quite strained. The result of this unhealthy working relationship, combined with Hewitt's back problems proved to be too much for Hewitt. In the spring of 1980, Hewitt took an extended sick leave from the church. Very little was done to assist Hewitt during his absence. Although he was given sick leave pay, he was expected to pay for his own replacement.[67] Hewitt never returned from his sick leave, and subsequently retired from the Cathedral in the summer of 1980. Frances Macdonnell, his assistant at that time, continued as interim organist and choirmaster until a replacement was to be found. Once Hewitt left the Cathedral, he did not return to the Cathedral, either as

[67] A formal explanation is not available for this leave in the literature. Macdonnell states that Hewitt had a reoccurring back injury which would cause him considerable pain at the organ console. Moreover, he had lost the top three choirboys after Christmas 1979 to changing voices, leaving Hewitt depressed at the declining condition of his once world class boys' choir.

organist, or parishioner, until 1997 when he was interested to see a new addition to the organ.

The Cathedral had not pre-authorized a pension plan and Hewitt had only contributed for five years to the Canada Pension Plan. Later that year, The Cathedral purchased an $80,000 life time annuity for his retirement. Hewitt was offered the organist position at St. Barnabas Anglican Church, Ottawa, where he stayed for seven years until his increasing blindness required him to retire from playing the organ altogether. Godfrey Hewitt passed away on the 30th of August, 2002; his memorial service was held in the Cathedral.

Hewitt received many honours for his work with the Cathedral choirs. In 1971 the Archbishop of Canterbury granted Hewitt the degree of Doctor of Music (Lambeth), and in 1976 he was made a member of the Order of Canada.

In the fall of 1980, the Cathedral's Organist Search Committee, led by Dean Downey, employed the services of two external members. Canadian organist Gerald Bales, chair of the Department of Music at the University of Ottawa, and Mario Bernardi, the conductor of the National Arts Centre Orchestra, assisted with the selection of a new organist. After auditions and interviews were finished, both Bales and Bernardi gave their support to hiring Frances Macdonnell. Dean Downey was at first opposed to hiring someone local; however, the rest of the committee convinced him that Macdonnell was the best choice.

Frances Macdonnell

Background

Frances Macdonnell was born in 1947 in Ottawa. She began piano lessons at the age of eight, and discovered the organ at sixteen: "I immediately knew that this is what I was meant to do."[68] While still in high school, Macdonnell took her first organ lesson at the Cathedral with Godfrey Hewitt in 1963, and after her second organ lesson was offered the position of organist at St. Alban's Church in Ottawa. She left Ottawa in 1965 to pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree in English at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.[69]

Macdonnell continued organ studies with Hewitt during her university studies in Kingston from 1965 to 1969. After graduation in 1969, she moved to London, England to study privately with Ralph Downes and Douglas Hawkridge, taking the exams at the Royal College of Organists. She completed both the Associate and Fellowship diplomas of the College and returned to Canada, with no job or money, in 1972. Initially she played as a freelance organist, subbing for church services and playing concerts in and around eastern Ontario and southern Quebec, but obviously found that she could not sustain a living from this type of work. She then accepted a government job at the department of Energy, Mines and Resources, and went back to Christ Church Cathedral as Hewitt's unpaid assistant.

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[68] "Christ Church Cathedral Gets a Musical First," *The Globe and Mail*, January 1 1981.
[69] Ibid.

In 1975, Macdonnell formed a mixed chamber choir at the Cathedral, named "The Cathedral Singers" with members drawn from both the Student Choir at the Cathedral, and from other local choirs in the city. The chamber choir was built on the model of British university chamber choirs, employing female sopranos, and male voices for all other voice parts (countertenors, tenors and basses). The chamber choir was highly successful, and won the Ralph Vaughan Williams Trophy for amateur church choirs at the Ottawa Music Festival consecutively from 1975 until 1982,[70] and won the prestigious Maclean-Hunter Canadian Church Choir Competition in 1979.[71]

As noted above, Macdonnell was eventually named the Organist and Choir Director of Christ Church Cathedral. This gave her the prestigious honour of being the only woman music director of a Cathedral in Canada, the United States or England at this time.[72]

In the first few months of her tenure, Macdonnell was commissioned to prepare the music for the state funeral of Governor General Jules Léger at the Roman Catholic Basilica in Ottawa, which then did not have a choir. This funeral marked the first of many State Services that Macdonnell and the choir were present for. Macdonnell re-established the connection that the Cathedral had had with

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[70] Eventually, the Ottawa Music Festival asked the Cathedral Singers to stop competing in the festival, as there were no church choirs in the city that could successfully compete against the group. By 1982, Macdonnell began entering the Cathedral Boys Choir in the same category, where it continued winning until the trophy was retired in 2003. The trophy currently resides in the Cathedral Archives.

[71] The annual Maclean-Hunter Canadian Church Choir Competition ran for three years, 1978 until 1980, and offered $12,000 in prizes in 19 categories. The Cathedral Singers won third prize in 1978, and the Grand Prize in 1979.

[72] "Christ Church Cathedral Gets a Musical First."

Government House some 100 years before. Regular trips were made to Rideau Hall, the residence of the Governor General, most notably for annual Christmas Gatherings for Governors General Sauvé, Hnatyshyn, LeBlanc, Clarkson and Jean, as well as appearances at the funerals of Léger and Michener.

In the early 1980s, the choir at Christ Church Cathedral was still very much in a rebuilding stage. There were fewer than a dozen boys, who rehearsed on Tuesday evenings, as well as an adult mixed choir which joined the boys' choir on Friday evenings for rehearsal, and Sunday mornings for weekly services. Gallery services such as were established by Hewitt in the 1970s continued, and Choral Evensong was also sung on a monthly basis with the choral accompaniment alternating between the Cathedral Singers and the Mixed choir.

By 1982, without any overt decision by vestry, clergy, congregation or music committee, but clearly with the guidance of Macdonnell, the choir had returned to a state of predominantly men and boys' voices.[73] The enrollment of boys' voices grew rapidly year by year, from fewer than twelve boys in 1980, to over thirty boys in 1982, largely due to a steady stream of auditions from Ashbury College, a local private boys' school. This was the largest number of boys' voices at the Cathedral since 1950. With this large number of boys' voices, Macdonnell was able return to dividing the Boys' Choir into two rehearsal groups: the senior boys group (12 years and over) which rehearsed on Tuesday evenings, and a junior boys group (11 years

[73] Macdonnell states that this happened simply by not replacing the women as they graduated and moved away. The additional boys made up enough volume to replace them.

and under) which rehearsed on Wednesday evenings. The men's choir rehearsed on Friday evenings with all the boys, and the entire choir sang each Sunday morning at the regular 10:30 AM service, and monthly evensong services. A new regimen with regard to choir uniform was instituted, and an expectation of regular attendance and appropriate behaviour was enforced. Awards were issued to choirboys at the end of each year which included scholarships for most improved, and the ones who had the best attendance records.

The Cathedral Singers, made up of some of the women who had left the mixed choir when it returned to a men and boys format and a few men from the Men and Boys' choir, rehearsed on Thursday evenings, appeared regularly at Evensong services and provided music ministry at hospitals, retirement homes, and smaller parishes around the National Capital area that did not have regular choirs.

Education, competitions, and the changing voice.

One of the lasting legacies of Macdonnell's work at the Cathedral, and arguably her most important contribution to development of the choral program was her commitment to a solid musical and theological education for the choirboys. As the younger boys were required to stay for the duration of all Sunday services, they were not able to attend Sunday School, where other children in the parish went to learn about scripture in small groups and in an age related atmosphere. Macdonnell took time out of every rehearsal period to teach the boys about scripture, and the relationship between the music they sang, the Liturgy and the Church Calendar. Macdonnell adapted a system originally designed by the Royal School of Church Music, where every choirboy was tested on a regular basis on subjects about the Church Calendar, Liturgy and music reading skills. Every choirboy was tutored and tested by Macdonnell in both group and private lessons. As each level was successfully mastered, the boys would receive a different colour ribbon and medallions were worn over their cassocks and surplices to indicate which level they had achieved. These achievements were recognized by the dean, during the church service for all members of the congregation to witness. The boys also relied on peer teaching and leadership within the choir, much like an organized sports team. Both the decani and cantoris[74] sides of the choir had a head boy as well as two team leaders who looked after new choirboys, making sure they knew where they were in the

[74] These terms are applied to Anglican church choirs, decani referring to the half of the choir sitting on the dean's side of the church, which is to the right of the congregation (South). The other half of the choir is referred to as the cantoris, which sits on the left side of the congregation (North) near the cantor. The choirs are divided antiphonally, meaning each side has a full complement of treble voices, countertenors, tenors and basses.

service, and which music was to be sung, and when. This highly successful teaching style gave older boys important responsibility, and younger boys the ambition to improve, so that they might proceed up to the higher levels of recognition and responsibility.

Many of the choirboys also enrolled in private lessons with Macdonnell starting at a young age. These lessons allowed Macdonnell to continue to provide intensive musical training, which included basic lessons in reading music, music theory and a continued education in church music and Anglican Liturgy, as well as singing. The boys were encouraged to take examinations offered by the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto, and it was not uncommon for a boy to have achieved a Grade Nine in Voice from the Royal Conservatory before his voice changed. Hewitt had begun the tradition of entering boys in the Music Festival in the 1950s, and Macdonnell made it a general rule for all choirboys to enter solo and ensemble classes (trios and quartets), as well as participating with the entire Boys Choir for the Vaughan Williams Anglican Office Trophy Class, a category which, as mentioned previously, the Boys Choir won with only one interruption for a successive twenty-one years. Numerous trophies and scholarships were awarded to the boys, and each boy who entered was an inspiration for the others to do well at the Festival. Such a competitive nature was seldom found internally in the choir, and instead was concentrated on a healthy rivalry between the Cathedral and St. Matthew's Anglican Church, a local parish church, which has a large boys' choir.

Several of the boys from Macdonnell's choir were successful in acquiring solo engagements in National Arts Centre oratorio and opera productions.

Macdonnell was also very proactive in finding a positive way to deal with the changing voice in young boys and men. As mentioned earlier, most Cathedral choirmasters did not have the time or energy to worry about what happens to the young boy after his voice has changed. Hewitt himself also did not have time to be concerned about the afterlife of a choirboy's voice. During the voice change, the young boy is faced with many psychological and physiological changes. The boy might feel that he is "not good enough" to sing with the rest of the choir, and suddenly his once-favoured voice is no longer needed.[75] Macdonnell's commitment to a solid musical education continued for some time after the boy had left the boys' choir. All of the choirboys were able to read music and had been trained to sing a second part by the time their voices had changed, and therefore transition to the adult men's choir was simple. First the boys were encouraged to sing alto, or countertenor, until the voice had settled, and they were comfortable singing tenor or bass. Over time, there were enough adolescent male voices in the choir that boys with changing voices looked forward to this transition, and many continued to sing in the choir until a move to a University or a change in profession forced them to leave. By the late 1980s the Cathedral choir had achieved a number of over sixty total male members, including boys' voices, teenage changing voices, and adult men's voices.

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[75] F. J. Swanson, "The Changing Voice: An Adventure, Not a Hazard," *The Choral Journal* 16, no. 7 (1976).

Recordings, Festivals and Tours

Macdonnell was also successful in increasing the national recognition of the Cathedral choir. From 1981 to 2003, the choir produced twelve recordings spanning the repertoire from traditional carols and hymns, to anthems both traditional and modern.[76] The first of these recordings was an LP, recorded in 1981, of the Advent Carol Service, a tradition in the Cathedral started by Hewitt in the early 1950s. Following this recording were a collection of tapes produced by the choir, mostly of favourite hymns to be sold internally to congregation members. The first of these hymn recordings came in 1988, and the choir continued to record both CDs and tapes every year for the next decade.

In 1982, Macdonnell initiated the Three Cathedrals Festival, an annual collaborative concert and Choral Evensong with the choirs of Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa, St. George's Cathedral, Kingston, and Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal. Each year, the three Cathedral Choirs, all of which housed a Men and Boys' choir at the time, met alternatively in one of the Cathedrals for a joint Choral Evensong and Concert. These events were highly successful at bringing exposure and recognition to the individual choirs, and allowed the three choirs to share in their unique format of the all male choir tradition. This Festival continued for nearly ten years, ending in the early 1990s when Kingston and Montreal could no longer sustain their Men and Boys Choir programs.

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[76] See appendix III for a complete list of recordings produced by the Cathedral Choir.

Besides touring locally within the area of eastern Ontario and western Quebec, the choir began to extend its reach through the rest of the Canada in 1989. Their first major tour was in 1989 when the Anglican Bishop of the Arctic invited the Cathedral Choir to the Northwest Territories in the hope that they could "persuade at least some of the residents that somebody in Ottawa, despite appearances, really does care about them."[77] Fifty-five members of the choir, along with members of the clergy, traveled from Ottawa to perform in Edmonton, Alberta; Yellowknife, Inuvik, Fort Smith and Hay River in the Northwest Territories; and Moose Jaw and Regina, Saskatchewan. The cost of the tour was roughly $75,000, a cost that could have taken them outside of Canada, perhaps to a European destination; however, the purpose of this trip was to take Anglican church music to regions of Canada which would not normally get a chance to hear this kind of live music:

> "We could have gone to England for half the price," says Garth Hampson, the choir's bass soloist, "but that's like taking coals to Newcastle. Our native people never get anything. That's a shame, because they have a lot to offer us."[78]

The choir brought repertoire from the English choral tradition, including anthems by Howells and verse anthems by Purcell, as well as traditional folk songs of mixed traditions in Canada, including French-Canadian and English-Canadian songs and hymns sung in the native languages of the Dene and Inuit cultures all of which were arranged by Macdonnell especially for this tour.[79] The Cathedral Choir also performed the world premiere of Violet Archer's "The Ninety-Sixth Psalm" which was commissioned by the Canada Council specifically for this northern tour. The

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[77] Hugh D. McKellar, "What's Going on Music," *Performing Arts Canada*, March 30 1991.
[78] Mark Richardson, "Choir Learns Native Lyrics for Arctic Visit," *The Ottawa Citizen*, July 11 1989.
[79] Ibid.

opening concert in Edmonton at All Saints' Anglican Cathedral was met with a favourable review:

> The main duty of a cathedral choir is singing anthems, and that's what Ottawa's Christ Church Cathedral Choir does best. Their first-ever northern tour, which will take them as far north as Inuvik, 2,100 km north [of Edmonton], began Friday in Edmonton at All Saints' Cathedral.
>
> Singing several splendid late-Victorian anthems, they nicely captured the grandeur of the robust works. Hubert Parry's *I Was Glad*, and John Stainer's *I Saw The Lord* were among the richest, as the 55-voice choir of men and boys provided a warm blend of baritone depth and treble purity which rang out exultantly.
>
> Works by Herbert Howells and Herbert Sumsion contained several tenderly lyrical moments which were well sung.
>
> The world premiere of Violet Archer's *The Ninety-Sixth Psalm* proved attractive and the choir seemed to embrace it fully.[80]

Once the choir returned home from their tour, the dean of America's new National Cathedral in Washington, DC, which was preparing for consecration, invited the choir and clergy of Christ Church Cathedral, informally referred to as Canada's National Cathedral, to sing Choral Evensong together with a half-hour recital before the Eucharist where The Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the world's Anglican Churches was present, as well as deans of North American Anglican and Episcopal cathedrals, holding their annual convention.[81] A large number of the congregation of the Cathedral accompanied the choir on this visit to Washington.

These two tours marked the beginning of a series of tours in which the choir traveled to the Atlantic Provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland in 1992; central and coastal British Columbia in 1995; and a return to the Maritimes, including Prince Edward Island in 1999. A smaller group of the choir together with a

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[80] John Charles, "Choir Pleases," *Sunday Sun*, September 3 1989.
[81] McKellar.

large number of the Cathedral Congregation traveled with Macdonnell to Iqaluit, Nunavut in 2000 where Macdonnell gave free organ lessons to local musicians. In the over ten years that the Cathedral Choir embarked on these tours, they traveled to nine provinces and two territories, the only Cathedral Choir in Canada to have achieved such a wide-ranging national exposure.

In 1996 Christ Church Cathedral was preparing to host centenary celebrations to mark the first hundred years of the diocese of Ottawa and, subsequently, the centenary of Christ Church as its Cathedral. A large part of this celebration would be centered on music, and Macdonnell was asked to plan for this task. Two adult choristers of the choir had suggested to Macdonnell that a large massed choir with representatives from the Cathedral Choirs in every diocese in Canada should be included. Macdonnell invited a quartet from each of the Cathedral Choirs across Canada with an offer to subsidize the cost of their airfare, and promised to concentrate fund raising efforts by the Ottawa Anglican Cathedral Choir to pay for sightseeing events and a banquet, while the guests were accommodated in congregational homes. Over 150 choristers from across Canada accepted this offer. Singers overflowed the sanctuary of the Cathedral with a festal Choral Evensong on Friday May 10th of that year, a concert of all four Handel Coronation Anthems on Saturday May 11, and a Festal Choral Eucharist on Sunday May 12, 1996.[82] The

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[82] "Music Festival to Celebrate Centenary of Diocese of Ottawa," *Quebec Diocesan Gazette*, April 1996.

events which required a strenuous degree of organization, were considered a resounding success.[83]

[83] The Massed Choir format established by Macdonnell at this event was used by the Cathedral of St. John's Newfoundland for the 500th anniversary of their diocese in 1999.

The 21st Century

The new millennium brought with it a new era of change at Christ Church Cathedral. The very popular dean, Peter Coffin, was elected as Bishop of the Diocese of Ottawa in 1999, giving way to a young priest, Shane Parker to become, Dean and Rector of Christ Church Cathedral.

In 2000, Parker hired an assistant for Frances, former chorister Timothy Piper. Piper was hired by Parker largely to conduct an all Girls' Choir at the Cathedral.[84] The new dean and Macdonnell did not see eye to eye on many issues surrounding the music program, ranging from such things as the continuation of Choral Matins and the Concert Series, to the acquisition of the controversial new Hymnal. In 2003, Macdonnell opted for early retirement from the Cathedral. A large service and reception, which included speeches and letters from former choristers and an Alumni Choir made of choristers from her time as Organist and Choirmaster (1980 to 2003), assembled at Christ Church Cathedral to pay tribute to Macdonnell.

Macdonnell continues to play an important role in the life of the Cathedral. At the time of writing of this paper she is still Director of The Cathedral Singers, and offers the boys in the choir private lessons to prepare them for Music Festival classes.

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[84] In July of 1990, after a vestry meeting in which a group of parishioners raised concerns over the fact that young girls in the parish were not receiving the same opportunities as the boys in the parish, a fifty page report was written on the "Feasibility of a Music Programme For Girls". After a lengthy discussion and a vote it was decided that a program such as this would be too taxing for one director to carry out, and too costly. The motion was defeated. Ten years later, Parker, having two sons in the boys' choir, and one daughter not in the choir, made the decision without vote to create a position for an assistant and to run the girls' choir program. Both the men and boys' choir as well as the girls' choir run concurrently at the Cathedral today, with great success.

Her title is "Organist Emeritus" of the Cathedral, and she attends concerts and services regularly at the Cathedral.

The Music at Christ Church Cathedral 1832-2003

In order to fully appreciate the work of Hewitt and Macdonnell one must have some understanding of the importance of music in the Anglican faith. This chapter will outline the musical needs of the Anglican Church and, by examining church bulletins, concert programs and the choir library of the Cathedral, the music sung at the Cathedral. The contributions that Hewitt and Macdonnell brought to the church will also be highlighted, as well as their contributions to the world-wide Anglican community.

The name Anglican means "of England" and refers to churches worldwide which follow the belief and liturgy of the Church of England. Anglican reformation began during the reign of King Henry VIII in the 1530s as a reformed church which challenged the authority of the Roman church. The Anglican Church received formal structure in 1562 under the reign of Elizabeth I. Fundamental organizational and articles of religion aside, the liturgical structure of the Anglican Church, at least for Eucharist services, is no different than that of Roman Catholic service. There are essentially two components of the liturgy. The first is called the Ordinary, and refers to parts of the service that never change. These include the parts of the mass that have been set to music for many thousands of years: the Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei. The second is called the Proper, and consists of prayers that vary from day to day in accordance with the seasons of the church, as well as the readings and the psalms of the day. One of the biggest advancements in Protestant reform was to

conduct church services in the vernacular language. The first Book of Common Prayer was written in 1549 and consisted of a simplified, and more importantly, English translation of the Latin liturgy. The new language naturally required new musical settings. These musical settings of the Ordinary of the mass mark the first significant contributions to the music of the Anglican tradition. Composers of the time included William Byrd and his contemporaries, including Thomas Tomkins, and nearly a century later Henry Purcell, who all made lasting contributions to the early music of the Anglican Church with their compositions.

Besides the liturgy of the Eucharist, the Anglican Church developed two other services which are unique to their faith: Matins and Evensong. These two 'office' services are intended to combine the many offices that took place in Catholic monasteries, which were designed to keep people in prayer every hour of every day. Matins and Evensong are respectively morning and evening prayer services that follow a strict liturgy of readings, psalms, canticles and prayers. The two Evensong canticles, the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, in particular have been set to music by many Anglican composers. The psalms set for these offices also present a unique element of the Anglican musical tradition. Until the Reformation, the Roman Liber Usualis had been the only source for monophonic chants for the Ordinary and Proper sung portions of the Catholic Mass, including all the psalms. Anglicans developed their own version of harmonized Anglican Chant for the psalms, which have been sung by congregations and choirs alike since the beginning of the Anglican Church.

The Cathedral Choir under Hewitt's leadership sang settings of the Eucharist as well as Matins and Evensong canticles and offered a regular diet of early Renaissance and Baroque English masters, such as Byrd and Purcell; Victorian and Edwardian masters such as Charles Villiers Stanford and Charles Hubert Parry; and early twentieth century masters such as Harold Darke and Herbert Howells. Hewitt also contributed significantly to liturgical music of the Anglican Church, composing settings of the morning canticle "Te Deum Laudamus" as well as numerous congregational settings of the music for the Eucharist, and the Evensong canticles.[85]

In 1982, the Anglican Church of Canada published its first significant change in wording of the services since the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) was printed in 1662. The Book of Alternative Services (BAS) changed the language of devotion to be more inclusive, and to revise the text of the liturgy, updating it from the English of King James to a more modern translation. This change called for new compositions of the Eucharist service, most of which developed in the direction of a concentrated effort to include settings more appropriate for congregational use. Macdonnell composed five Eucharist settings, some for choir only, and some for congregational use.[86] The Gloria from the Madawaska Mass she wrote in 1985 was used as the BAS congregational Gloria regularly at the Cathedral for the next twenty years.

As mentioned earlier in this paper, among the most popular services held at the Cathedral were the Carol Services. Hewitt initiated the presentation of three carol

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[85] See Appendix IV for a list of known compositions of Godfrey Hewitt.
[86] See Appendix V for a complete list of all the compositions of Frances Macdonnell.

services during his tenure at the Cathedral, including: the Advent Carol Service, Nine Lessons and Carols, and the Easter Carol Service. These services were very simple in their structure and included a series of seasonal readings juxtaposed with both congregational hymns and choir carols. The carols themselves were also uncomplicated, usually short strophic a cappella works. Many of these carols were taken from the collection of carols published by Oxford University Press entitled *Carols for Choirs*, some that Hewitt found were much older works, and are now not available in print.

With Macdonnell, the carol service tradition continued to flourish. She introduced more modern carols by Willcocks and Rutter as well as newly composed works by local composers, and some of her own compositions. In addition to the three carol services that Hewitt had introduced, Macdonnell added two new carol services, one for Epiphany Sunday (around January 6th), marking the visit of the three Wisemen to the infant Christ child, and one for Passiontide that was celebrated on Palm Sunday. The Passiontide carol service allowed the choir to sing other, less-known carols of a darker and more serious nature, written for the crucifixion and death of Jesus. These additional services always proved to be a great success for the music program at Christ Church Cathedral, and were always very well attended.

Both Hewitt and Macdonnell also composed anthems for the choirs many of them written for special occasions. As mentioned earlier, for example, Hewitt composed much of the music in honour of Queen Elizabeth II's visit in 1967.

Macdonnell's first composition for the choir was in 1984 when the Cathedral was chosen as the site for the weekly CBC church service broadcast. For this she composed a short anthem entitled "Let not your Heart be Troubled" for unaccompanied choir. The work, now published by Oecumuse in England, along with her first mass setting that same year, started for Macdonnell a new career in composition. She never sought to collect royalties from her compositions, and most of them have only been performed at the Cathedral. Over the course of the next twenty years Macdonnell composed over twenty-five works, including five mass settings, and she continues to compose in her retirement.

Concerts at the Cathedral have always played an important role in the musical life of the parish. From the early years of Hewitt's organ recital series in the 1930s, the Cathedral established itself as a popular venue for quality music recitals. Hewitt expanded his concert series in the 1950s and 1960s to include the Cathedral choirs and guest musicians. In 1971 he introduced his then twelve year-old daughter, Angela, to his concert series where she performed Haydn piano concertos, with her father as accompanist on the organ. The concert received extremely favourable reviews, and was a catalyst to launch Angela's highly successful career as one of Canada's finest concert pianists.

The choirs of the Cathedral were also featured prominently in both Hewitt's and Macdonnell's concert series where they performed Cathedral anthem repertoire including double choir music of Stainer and Parry, as well as large choral works such

as Handel's *Messiah, Dixit Dominus* and the complete Coronation Anthems as well as Haydn's *Nelson Mass*. Additionally, the choirs of the Cathedral, both the Men and Boys' choir and The Cathedral Singers, produced three LP recordings under Hewitt's direction, and fourteen recordings, in LP, cassette and CD format under Macdonnell's leadership.[87] The prize money that the Cathedral Singers collected in the MacLean-Hunter Canadian Church Choir Competition in 1979 allowed Macdonnell to record her first LP with The Cathedral Singers entitled "*Music by William Byrd*" which was highly successful, and even made a modest profit. The profit from this recording allowed Macdonnell to open a bank account, which served as a starter fund for future recordings of the choir. Several of the recordings in Macdonnell's years are of favourite hymns, intended for distribution within the parish, as fundraising opportunities for choir tours, however a number of recordings of larger sacred works were designed for a more discriminating audience, including one CD recorded in 2001 of Macdonnell's compositions. Many of the recordings were made in preparation for tours, to allow congregations of churches away from the Cathedral to experience a type of traditional Anglican Church music, which would not be readily available for them.

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[87] See Appendix III for a complete list of recordings by the Cathedral Choirs.

Conclusion

The dedication required to operate a volunteer choir reaches far beyond the job description of the average church organist. Both Godfrey Hewitt and Frances Macdonnell in their own ways had to find ways to preserve the English Anglican choral tradition at Christ Church Cathedral Ottawa. Hewitt, who took his posting at the Cathedral in the middle of the Great Depression, had to deal with many unique and unprecedented external pressures. For example, in tough economic times, when the church was struggling to support a series of concerts which the organist was eager to perform, Hewitt took it upon himself to carry any financial loss. Hewitt also gave organ lessons free of charge to eager new students who could not afford to pay for them. By volunteering his time and talents to these things, Hewitt created a greater awareness for the art of organ performance, and inspired a new generation of Canadian organists to continue his legacy at other churches both in the national capital area and throughout Canada. Hewitt's legacy is recognized by a $5000 memorial scholarship in his memory created by Macdonnell and offered annually to an outstanding young Canadian organist.

Macdonnell, like Hewitt, spent many hours outside of her regular duties as cathedral organist and choirmaster, finding ways to improve the sound and exposure of the choir. Her commitment to education, both musically and spiritually, has played a major role in developing some of the most well rounded church musicians in Canada. Macdonnell also promoted the choir through the Cathedral Concert Series,

as well as in four Canadian tours, taking the choir from the east to the west coast, and to the remotest locations of Canada's north.

The atmosphere of musicianship which first Hewitt and then Macdonnell created at the Cathedral has arguably left a lasting impression on the city of Ottawa. At the time of writing still has two highly successful men and boys' church choirs, one at Christ Church Cathedral, and the other at St. Matthew's Anglican Church situated in an area of Ottawa known as The Glebe. These choirs are the last two remaining successful men and boys church choirs in Canada.[88]

The end result of both Hewitt's and Macdonnell's dedication to the men and boys' choir of Christ Church Cathedral is one of great importance. Both directors felt the need to carry on a tradition which was born in the Church of England, and is rare to find elsewhere in the Anglican Church throughout Canada. The long-term success of this choir may only be truly appreciated with time, however the extraordinary impact of the work of its two dedicated musical leaders – Hewitt and Macdonnell - their students and choristers, can already be seen to have made a lasting mark on the musical mission of the Anglican Church of Canada.

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[88] At the time of writing, the only other locations in Canada that support men and boys' choirs are St. Peter's Brockville which has a very small men and boys' choir, and Grace Church-on-the-Hill in Toronto, which has a 40 voice men and boys' choir. St. James' Cathedral in Toronto also had a men and boys' choir since 1898, but moved to a mixed choir of boys, women and men in September of 2007.

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Appendix I

Organists and Choirmasters at Christ Church, Ottawa
1832 – 2007 [89]

1832 – 1837	Vacant (no instrument or choir present in the church)
1837 – 1850	J. F. Lehmann (Organist and Choirmaster)
1850 – 1862	John Mercer (Organist and Choirmaster)
1862 – 1872	S. B. Fripp (Organist and Choirmaster)
1872 – 1876	Frederick Mills (Organist and Choirmaster)
1876 – 1879	Vacant (Volunteer Organist)
1879 – 1886	John W. F. Harrison (Organist and Choirmaster)
1886 – 1900	Dingley Brown (Organist and Choirmaster)
1900 – 1921	Arthur Dorey (Organist and Choirmaster)
1921 – 1926	J. Hughes Johnson (Organist and Choirmaster)
1926 – 1931	George Crawford (Organist and Choirmaster)
1931 – 1980	Godfrey Hewitt (Organist and Choirmaster)
1975 – 1980	Frances Macdonnell (assistant organist, director of The Cathedral Singers)[90]
1980 – 2003	Frances Macdonnell (Organist and Choirmaster)
2000 –	Timothy Piper (Assistant Organist, Director of the Cathedral Girl's Choir)
2003 –	Mathew Larkin (Organist and Choirmaster)

[89] Compiled by the author, with assistance from Hubbard.
[90] At the time of writing, Macdonnell continues to direct the Cathedral Singers.

Appendix II

Choirs at Christ Church, Ottawa
1831 – 2007 [91]

1832 – 1837	No choir on record
1837 – c. 1845	Sunday School Choir
1837 – 1891	Mixed Adult Choir
1891 – 1972	Men and Boys' Choir
1972 – c. 1975	Men and Boys' Choir (mainly for Evensong services)
1972 – 1975	Mixed Adult Choir
1975 – c. 1982	Mixed Adult Choir with treble Boys' voices[92]
1975 –	"Cathedral Singers" Mixed Adult Chamber Choir*
c. 1982 –	Men and Boys' Choir*
2001 –	Girls' Choir*

* still in existence at time of writing

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[91] Ibid.

[92] As described in the body of this paper, there was a slow transition from the student mixed choir formed in 1972 back to predominantly men and boys by 1982. There was no formal decision that affected this outcome. As the female students of the choir graduated and moved on in their professional lives, no attempt was made to replace them in the choir. A few of the women moved to the Cathedral Singers, thereby returning the main choir back to men and boys' voices.

Appendix III

Discography

LP, Cassette and CD Recordings of the choirs of Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa (in Chronological Order)[93]

c. 1962 *I will magnify Thee,* The choristers of Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa - Organist and master of the choristers: Godfrey Hewitt, no label, LP recording.

c. 1967 *The Choir of Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Director: Godfrey Hewitt, MG-6177 LP recording.

1979. *Music by William Byrd,* The Cathedral Singers of Ottawa, MP-1062 LP recording.

1981. *Advent Procession With Carols,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, MP-1081 LP recording.

1983. *Orgelbüchlein (J. S. Bach),* The Cathedral Singers of Ottawa, Frances Macdonnell, Organ, MP-1062 LP recording and audio cassette.

1988. *Praise My Soul, The King of Heaven,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Organist and Choir Director: Frances Macdonnell,WRC4-5860 audio cassette.

1989. *Music North – Arctic '89,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Organist and Choir Director: Frances Macdonnell, WRC4-6218 audio cassette.

1989. *Once in Royal David's City,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Organist and Choir Director: Frances Macdonnell, WRC4-6183 audio cassette.

1991. *Hear my Prayer,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Organist and Choir Director: Frances Macdonnell, WRC4-6540 audio cassette.

1991. *O Worship The King,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Organist and Choir Director: Frances Macdonnell, WRC4-6529 audio cassette.

1992. *Music for Atlantic Canada,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Organist and Choir Director: Frances Macdonnell, WRC4-6614 audio cassette.

1993. *O Come All Ye Faithful,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Organist and Choir Director: Frances Macdonnell, WRC4-6694 audio cassette, WRC8-6694 compact disc.

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[93] Complied by the author, with assistance from Frances Macdonnell and Ross Jewell, who was a long-time chorister in the Cathedral choir, and recording engineer for recording produced from 1988 onwards.

1995. *Unto the Hills,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Organist and Choir Director: Frances Macdonnell, WRC8-6859 compact disc.

1998. *A Century of Celebration,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Organist and Choir Director: Frances Macdonnell, WRC8-7101 compact disc.

1999. *I Saw Three Ships,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Organist and Choir Director: Frances Macdonnell, WRC8-7310 compact disc, WRC4-7310 audio cassette.

2001. *Eternal Light of Light: Compositions of Frances Macdonnell,* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Organist and Choir Director: Frances Macdonnell, WRC8-7573 compact disc.

Appendix IV

Known Sacred choral composition by Godfrey Hewitt (in chronological order)[94]

c. 1930. *Evening Hymn.* for SATB, a cappella.

c. 1930. *Introduction and Fugue.* Organ solo.

c. 1930. *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in E Minor.* SATB with organ accompaniment.

c. 1930. *Two Songs – No. 1 "The Wings"; No. 1. "Bed in Summer".*

c. 1940. *Versicles, Responses and Canticles based on R. Vaughan Villiams.* SATB, organ accompaniment.

c. 1945. *Te Deum Laudamus.* SATB, organ accompaniment.

c. 1945. *Jubilate Deo.* SATB, organ accompaniment.

c. 1950 . Communion Service in c# minor. SATB, a cappella.

c. 1950. *O Little Town of Bethlehem.* arr. Hewitt. SATB, a cappella.

c. 1960. *Benedicite, Omnia Opera – the Song of the Three Children.* Unison congregation, organ accompaniment.

c. 1965. *Canticles for Matins and Evensong.* Cantor, unison choir and congregation, organ accompaniment.

c. 1965. *Versicles and Responses in D.* Unison, organ accompaniment.

c. 1978. *Missa Brevis in A.* for SATB choir with bass and soprano solo, organ accompaniment.

Hymn descants for:
Praise, my soul (Praise, My Soul the King of heaven)
Nicaea (Holy, Holy, Holy)
Redhead No. 46 (Bright the vision that delighted)
Cwm Rhondda (Guide me, O thou great Jehovah)
Ratisbon (God of mercy, God of grace)
St. Gertrude (Onward, Christian soldiers)
St. George's, Windsor (Come, ye thankful people, come).

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[94] Compiled by the author with assistance from Library and Archives Canada, Florence Hayes, Archivist, and Frances Macdonnell. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list. As mentioned earlier in the paper, none of Hewitt's compositions have been published, and as a result, many are presumed lost. These are the known compositions which are available in the Cathedral's choir library, and in Library and Archives Canada.

Appendix V

Sacred choral compositions by Frances Macdonnell (in chronological order)[95]

1984. *Let not your heart be troubled,* SATB (div) with treble solo, a cappella, Oecumuse.

1984. *Mass in A* [Missa brevis], SATB, a cappella with optional organ accompaniment, Christ Church Cathedral Press.*

1985. *Mass in the Aeolian Mode*, SATB, organ accompaniment, Christ Church Cathedral Press.*

1985. *The Madawaska Mass,* Unison (congregational) with organ accompaniment, Christ Church Cathedral Press.*

1986. *I am the way*, SATB, a cappella with SATB solos, Oecumuse.

1986. *Mass in G minor* [Missa brevis], SATB div., a cappella with optional organ accompaniment, Christ Church Cathedral Press.*

1987. *The Bell Song,* Unison (treble voices), piano or organ accompaniment, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

1987. *The Reproaches,* unison with baritone solo, unpublished

1989. *All shall be well*, based on the hymn tune *Ar hyd y nos,* arranged for two-part, piano or organ accompaniment, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

1989. *Christ is made the sure foundation*, SATB, a cappella, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

1990. *Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle*, SATB, organ accompaniment, Oecumuse.

1991. *The Mohawk Carol,* SATB, a cappella, with bass solo, unpublished.

1992. *Set up thyself, O God,* SATB (div), organ accompaniment, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

1993. *The Lord is my Light,* 2-part treble voices, organ or piano accompaniment, Christ Church Cathedral press.

1993. *The Spirit of the Lord,* SATB with baritone solo, a cappella, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

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[95] Compiled by the author, with assistance from Frances Macdonnell.

1994. Gabriel Fauré, *[Madrigal] Psaume,* arr. Frances Macdonnell, with sacred words for SATB, piano or organ accompaniment, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

1995. *Missa Canadensis*, SATB (div) with organ accompaniment and an optional congregational unison line, Christ Church Cathedral Press. (Commissioned by the Men and Boys' choir of Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa).

1996. *Epiphany Hymn*, SATB (div), with treble and baritone solo, organ accompaniment, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

1997. *I heard the voice of Jesus say,* SATB (div) a cappella, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

1998. *Steal Away,* SATB (div) with treble solo, a cappella, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

1999. *Light,* SATB with Soprano solo, organ accompaniment with Inuit drums, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

2000. *Eternal Light of Light*, SATB, organ accompaniment, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

2000. *Sing Nowell!,* SATB (div), a cappella, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

2001. *Bow hither out of Heaven,* SATB, a cappella, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

2002. *Calvary,* SATB (div) a cappella, Christ Church Cathedral Press.

2007. *Arise, O God,* SATB (div), a cappella, unpublished (Commissioned by Da Camera Singers, Edmonton).

* The four short masses (*The Madawaska Mass, Mass in G minor, Mass in A, Mass in the Aeolian mode*) were printed together in one booklet entitled *"Eucharistic Music for the Book of Alternative Services",* Christ Church Cathedral Press, 1987.